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TITLE: THERMAL TRANSFER PRINTER/LABELLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CASSETTES OR READY-TO-USE PACKAGES

Amendment C: CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 1 - 4 (canceled by an earlier amendment).

1) (canceled) THERMAL TRANSFER PRINTER/LABELLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CASSETTES OR READY-TO-USE PACKAGES comprising an enclosing structure (1), complete with motor drives, for printing ribbons (3) and receiving ribbons (9, 9'), which may be joined in a thermal printhead (7), characterised in that the spool of printing ribbon (3), the spool of receiving ribbon (9, 9') or both, are contained in special cassettes (2), (14), (15), or ready-to-use packages, the cassette (2), of a shape and size depending on the types of ribbon, may suitably accommodate the take-up core (4) and spool of printing ribbon (3), the core and spool have a central hole through which a driving device (5) may be inserted, the cassette (14) has an asymmetric conformation such as to contain the spool of the ribbon medium (9') and the take-up core (13), the core and spool have a central hole through which a driving device (10) may be inserted, the cassette (15) has a composite form, distinct from the previous ones, in order that its front part may contain the spool of printing ribbon (3) and take-up core (4) while the rear part holds the spool of the ribbon medium (9) and take-up core (13), which similarly have a central hole to accommodate the devices (5) and (10) for the respective drives.

Further characterised in that the printing apparatus (1) features two externally motorised driving devices (5) and (10), which also serve as a guide for introducing the cassettes (2), (14), (15), and moreover features a thermal printhead (7) whose position may be adjusted via a device (6) with which it is integral, a series of idle rollers (11), a series of motorised rollers (12) and a rubber-coated drive roller (8).

2) (canceled) THERMAL TRANSFER PRINTER/LABELLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CASSETTES OR READY-TO-USE PACKAGES according to the main claim, characterised in that the invention includes control devices for locking the drive mechanisms (5,10), and devices (6) for rewinding and checking the ribbons for wear.

3) (canceled) THERMAL TRANSFER PRINTER/LABELLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CASSETTES OR READY-TO-USE PACKAGES according to the main claim, characterised in that the specific devices for picking up, feeding out and positioning the ribbons are, in all four versions, configured exclusively for ribbons contained in cassettes or equivalent quick-load packages.

4) (canceled) THERMAL TRANSFER PRINTER/LABELLER SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR CASSETTES OR READY- TO-USE PACKAGES according to the main claim, characterised in that the "ready-to-use package" essentially comprises a spool and take-up core rigidly connected by means of any rigid support.

Claim 5 (canceled herein).

5. (canceled) A thermal transfer printer apparatus comprising:

an enclosing structure having an interior volume;

a thermal printhead positioned in said enclosing structure;

a first cassette positioned in said interior volume of said enclosing structure, said first cassette having a take-up core and a spool of printing ribbon therein, said first cassette having a first hole corresponding to said spool of printing ribbon and a second hole corresponding to said spool of printing ribbon;

a first driving shaft extending through through one of said first and second holes and extending outwardly of said enclosing structure so as to be suitable for receiving a driving force applied thereto;

a second cassette of an asymmetrical configuration positioned in said interior volume of said enclosing structure, said second cassette having a spool of a ribbon medium and a take-up core therein, said second cassette having a first hole and a second hole corresponding respectively to said spool of the ribbon medium and to said take-up core;

a second driving shaft extending through one of said first and second holes and said second cassette and extending outwardly of said enclosing structure so as to be suitable for receiving a driving force applied thereto, said thermal printhead receiving the printing ribbon and said ribbon medium therein;

a printhead adjustment arm integrally connected to said thermal printhead and suitable for adjustably moving said thermal printhead in said enclosing structure;

a series of idle rollers mounted in said enclosing structure so as to receive the ribbon medium thereover;

a motorized roller mounted in said enclosing structure in spaced relation to said series of idle rollers, said motorized rollers receiving the ribbon medium thereover; and

a rubber-coated drive roller positioned adjacent said thermal printhead in said

enclosing structure, said rubber-coated drive roller receiving the ribbon medium thereover.

6. (new) A thermal transfer printer apparatus comprising:

a base;

a thermal printhead positioned on said base;

a first cassette positioned on said base, said first cassette having a take-up core and a spool of printing ribbon, said first cassette having a first driving member corresponding to said spool of printing ribbon and extending outwardly of said first cassette and a second driving member corresponding to said spool of printing ribbon and extending outwardly of said second cassette, said first and second driving members being suitable for receiving a driving force applied thereto;

a second cassette of an asymmetrical configuration positioned on said base, said second cassette having a spool of a ribbon medium and a take-up core therein, said second cassette having a third driving member cooperative with said spool of the ribbon medium and extending outwardly therefrom, and second cassette having a fourth driving member cooperative with said take-up core and extending outwardly therefrom, said third and fourth driving members suitable for receiving a driving force applied thereto, said thermal printhead receiving the printing ribbon and the ribbon medium therein;

a printhead adjustment arm integrally connected to said thermal printhead and suitable for adjustably moving said thermal printhead in relation to said base;

a series of idler rollers mounted on said base so as to receive the ribbon medium thereover;

a motorized roller mounted on said base in spaced relation to said series of idler rollers, said motorized rollers receiving the ribbon medium thereover; and

a rubber-coated drive roller positioned adjacent said thermal printhead on said base,  
said rubber-coated drive roller receiving the ribbon medium thereover.